



January 27, 2005

Via Electronic Filing

Marlene H. Dortch
Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street SW
Washington, DC 20554

**Re: MM Docket No. 99-325
Presentation of National Public Radio, Inc.
Ex Parte Notice**

Dear Ms. Dortch:

Pursuant to Section 1.1200, et seq., of the Commission's Rules, National Public Radio, Inc. ("NPR") hereby notifies the Commission of the following *ex parte* presentation in the above-referenced proceeding.

On Tuesday, January 25, 2005, Mike Starling, NPR Vice President for Engineering, and Mike Riksen, NPR Vice President for Government Relations, met separately with Catherine Bohigian, of Commissioner Martin's office, and Jon Cody, of Chairman Powell's office, to discuss recent developments in public radio's conversion to digital broadcasting. We emphasized the increasing importance to public radio of immediate authorization of digital audio multicasting.

NPR provided information summarizing Congressional funding provided to public radio stations, through the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, for the digital conversion as well as an update on the number of public radio stations that are on the air with digital radio broadcasts and those stations moving in the near-term toward digital operations. Stations are converting to DAB in large numbers, and Congress and CPB have committed substantial funds to stations' DAB conversion, principally because of the multicasting capability of the iBiquity Digital HD technology. NPR noted that public radio stations will quickly implement multicasting operations following action by the Commission authorizing its use. The more quickly the Commission moves to authorize multicasting, the more quickly public radio stations can employ Federal transition dollars to broaden and improve their public service. Additionally, timely authorization action would enable transmitter manufacturers to offer and stations to receive DAB conversion funding to implement technology that both facilitates multicasting and reduces station costs. Conversely, delays in approval of multicasting not only slows the implementation

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of programming initiatives to improve public service, but also increases conversion costs for public radio stations.

As it has previously, NPR urged the Commission to move immediately to authorize the use of multicasting. NPR noted that the Commission's Media Bureau previously approved special temporary authority ("STA") for Sirius Satellite Radio and XM Satellite Radio to utilize terrestrial repeater stations notwithstanding the pendency of a rulemaking proceeding addressing that specific issue. In addition, the Media Bureau previously approved blanket STAs for radio stations to utilize dual analog and digital antennas notwithstanding a Commission Report and Order mandating the use of a single, hybrid antenna. Public radio stations all across the country are prepared to utilize HD Radio technology to expand and improve their public service, and a blanket STA authorizing multicasting would therefore serve the public interest.

Please direct any questions you may have to the undersigned at 202-513-2050.

Sincerely,

Gregory A. Lewis /s/

Gregory A. Lewis
Associate General Counsel